

FESTIVAL VIRGIN

I went to the Women's Music Festival (Bloomington) for the first time. Yes, I am a Festival Virgin! Anyone with a green armband, could and would hug you. And there were lots of green armbands.

The festival was well organized, only the weather was uncooperative. There were many workshops during the day, videos and theater productions in the afternoons, and concerts in the evening. The market place contained all types of items, all women-made and women-sold. It was a walk back to the 60's with all the tie-dyed clothes, headbands, beads and everyone hugging one another.

The workshops were many, varied, and were staggered over the days so that you could attend many of them. Some of the topics included health, sports, spirituality, music, politics, and finances. There was a workshop of interest for every woman attending the festival. The first workshop I attended, was the Festi-virgin workshop. I was told the who, what, when and where. We were also given instructions on how to find our way around and the many aspects of being a virgin again.

The concerts showcased many noted artists and were enjoyable and entertaining. Some of the entertainers were Suzanne Westenhoefer, Cris Williamson, Tret Fure, Jamie Anderson and Margie Adams. Each concert featured music and comedy. After the concerts, there was more music at the Bloomington Cafe or for a more quiet end to the evenings, a video. I also attended a play one afternoon.

It was definitely a worthwhile trip with lots of good information and interesting sights.

.....submitted by Sue

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OPEN ARMS DEADLINE/MEETING

The deadline for submissions for the August newsletter is July 14th. Submissions received after July 14th may not be published in the July newsletter. Mail submissions to *Open Arms*, P.O. Box 845, Mishawaka, IN 46546 or give to any staff member.

Newsletter Meeting July 13, 6:30 p.m. For more information call any staff member.

Does the Bible Really Condemn Homosexuality?

submitted by P.T.

People Magazine (5/26/97) contained the following letter: "As a Birmingham resident, I am proud that our ABC affiliate station chose courage over cowardice in electing not to air the Ellen show. Homosexuality is not a sin solely in the eyes of Jerry Falwell. In both the Old and New Testaments, the Bible plainly states that homosexuality is a perverse and detestable sin." SB

This perspective is ever present in our society; but, does the Bible plainly state that homosexuality is a perverse and detestable sin? The leadership at Southside Christian Church, D.O.C., is convinced that the writer's perspective of the Bible in general, and homosexuality in particular, is borne of fear, and sustained by intentional and pervasive ignorance and arrogance. *It is not the Bible that plainly states that homosexuality is a sin, but people who interpret the Bible that plainly state that homosexuality is a sin.*

Striving to end ignorance and combat arrogance, a seminar on "Homosexuality and the Bible" was provided to the community by Southside Christian Church, Disciples of Christ. The seminar's participants presented alternative Christian interpretations of biblical passages which are frequently used to condemn those who practice Homosexuality, and to furnish people with moral authority for social, economic, and cultural discrimination.

The seminar first provided a conceptual framework for understanding and interpreting the Bible. Three questions were asked: 1) What is the truth?, 2) Who owned the truth?, and 3) Who has the right to interpret truth? *For many the Bible is the Truth; for others, however, the Bible contains Truth. This distinction is important.* While both views hold that God is the source of truth, the latter view alone acknowledges the social, cultural, political and economic influences which existed at the various times the Bible was written. Most importantly, this view maintains that authors of the biblical texts added their perspectives of God and truth which were contemporaneous with their times. As such, the prejudices and stereotypes of those times were recorded and subsequently interpreted as being God's truth for all time. In addition, those who historically have owned and interpreted this tainted presentation of truth are responsible for the sustained and current propagation of misunderstanding and prejudice regarding the nature of homosexuality and homosexual relationships.....continued on Page 5

OPEN ARMS ENTERS THE COMPUTER AGE WITH NEW E-MAIL ADDRESS

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E-MAIL ADDRESS mdills@juno.com

Kaye & Marcia.....219-271-0338

Jean.....219-259-2177

Suze.....219-254-8676 (Beeper)

COMMUNITY EVENTS

DUE TO THE SOFTBALL SEASON,

3rd FRIDAY OUT WILL BE POSTPONED through the month of August....you are invited to



attend the games and cheer the team on to victory!! To check on the *Whistle Stop's* playing times and field location just call CityLine 674-0900 and punch in 2233 for the updated softball schedule

JULY 12, 7:30 pm.....Mountain Moving Coffeehouse

1650 West Foster, Ebenezer Lutheran Church, Andersonville, Illinois (773-477-8362) is proud to present ***** ALIX DOBKIN in concert *****

Now that she is living in California, there is no telling when this inspiring, folk singer/storyteller extraordinaire/lesbian legend will surface. We are just glad that she loves "OUR TOWN."

THURSDAY, JULY 17.....There will be a meeting to plan a **SINGLES** gathering to occur in the Fall. We'd love to have your input. Call Lynn at 259-6801 for information &/or directions to meeting location.

SATURDAY, JULY 19.....4th Annual Canoe Trip....Meet at St. Patrick's Park 10 a.m. (IND. time) \$20.00 per couple, singles can be accomodated. Lunch included. RSVP by July 10 to Lori/Sherrill 616-684-6913



SEEKING BRIDGE PLAYERS

We are looking for one or two women to join us in playing Bridge. If you know how to play the German card game "SCHARFSKOPF" (sheepshead), let us know.

Bridge Players, 3305 Hedge Maple Court, South Bend, Ind. 46628



LESBIAN SUPPORT GROUP

Every Tuesday ..7-9pm.... for info: write to LSG, P.O. Box 1612, Mishawaka, Ind. 46544

UP AND COMING EVENTS

AUGUST 12-17
near Hart, Michigan
Michigan's 22nd Womyn's Music Festival



This gathering attracts 6-8000 annually. Situated on 650 secluded acres, the festival offers a women's Film Festival, 300 Workshops, craftswomen, and three Performance Stages featuring music, dance, comedy and theater. WWTMC, Box 22, Walhalla, MI. 49458 phone 616-757-4766 fax 616-757-3414 www.michfest.com

AUGUST 24-30 & AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 6
'Camp' Camp.....Kezar Falls, Maine.....The nation's first organized week-long summer experience to celebrate the homosexual lifestyle, designed to be a respite from the homophobic world. The mixture of both individual and planned group activities offered will allow all participants to make new friends, know their community support, and rediscover their capacity for new experiences in the company of brothers and sisters. Singles and partners are invited. For further information contact Bill Cole toll free: 1-888-924-8380; fax: 609-683-1795; e-mail at billcole@worldnet.att.net or visit the 'Camp' Camp Web site at <http://www.campcamp.com>.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 31 in DeKalb, Illinois.....the Midwest Womyn's Autumnfest.....

featuring Cris Williamson, Tret Fure, Alix Dobkin, Suede and others. Gates open up at 11a.m. For More Information: Athena Productions, 217 S. 2nd Street #193, DeKalb, IL. 60115 Call 815-748-5359 or e-mail: Autumnfest@aol.com Web site! <http://members.aol.com/autumnfest/index.htm>

SEPTEMBER 3 - 9 in Key West, Florida 1997 Women Fest

Comedy-tea dance by the sea-street fair-wine tasting dinners-cocktail parties-infamous wet t-shirt contest-picnics-scuba trips-reef adventures-sunset cruises-4th annual film festival-back country kayak tour-ect.....1-800-526-3559 SASE: 201 Coppit Road #106A, Key West, Fla.33040 EMAIL:jacq5645@aol.com

1998 DATES SEPT. 9 THRU 15

SEPTEMBER 6 in Columbus, Ohio....9th Annual Ohio Womyn's Festival

Featuring Cris Williamson w/ Tret Fure, Suzanne Westenhoeffer, and Nuru among others. Also a market area w/over 70 craft booths... (11am-11 pm) for more info.....Lesbian Business Association, P.O. Box 82086, Columbus, Ohio 43202 or call 614-267-3953

WALKING LESSONS

It never occurred to me that disability could steal my butchy walk.

Remember the song "Walk Like a Man?" Originally a hit in the 1963, three years after I came out, everywhere I went teenagers and little kids used it to taunt me. It wasn't even a good song, with its repetitive melody, simplistic words and macho content. Despite its deficiencies, that musical instrument of torture made the top ten again in 1974. I got the message when kids began to serenade me again -- it was my walk, the butch stance, more than anything else, that defined my androgyny.

Later, when my novel The Swashbuckler was published, readers everywhere asked me to demonstrate the main character's "diddy-bop" walk. Each wanted to walk like a butch -- not like a man. Through them I finally learned to be proud of my shocking manner of ambulation, to flaunt it when I passed local anti-gay activists, to revel in it among other queers, and never disguise it.

Then I developed arthritis in my feet. I'd had intermittent arch problems since childhood, but now, my big toes began to hurt when I walked and cramp when I sat or laid down. My walk wasn't affected until I fell across a muddy ditch this winter and bent back those toes to the point where, were I not stubbornly butch, I would have screamed loudly enough to flush every wild creature from the woods.

Of course, again like a good butch, I continued to ignore the pain. As the weeks went by I hobbled more and more. This began to get old. I tried chiropractic and acupuncture. Finally, I submitted to medical help. Surgery was recommended to remove bone spurs and to stimulate growth of scar tissue since my cartilage had worn away where it mattered most. So much for a jock youth.

Recovery's been a eye-opener. I was on my feet as of day one, in post-op shoes and thick bandages. Walking isn't a pleasant experience, but part of my therapy. I learned how it feels to be too disabled to drive, but only for a week. I'm learning how it feels to creep down the street, absolutely incapable of walking fast, to climb stairs sideways clutching handrails, to watch curious passers by slide their eyes down to my feet and away, embarrassed.

For the first time in my life I can't walk butch. Can't express myself through anything near a diddy-bop, swagger or stride. And I realize that some permanently disabled people can never walk butch. What a privilege I've enjoyed all those years. What freedom to express myself!

What if my foot problems don't resolve -- the physician couldn't promise anything. Will I wear a tie when I began to use a walker? Festoon the back of my wheelchair with a huge rainbow triangle? Will I still be me?

Even now, as I recover, unable to balance or handle more than one physical task at a time, I let Lover open doors and carry things for me.

I'm watching an old butch friend with pulmonary problems go through something similar. She's become dependent on her more able-bodied friends for things she once proudly, gladly did for herself and for others. She's graciously learning to accept her declined abilities -- as she says, "giving it hell."

And, hey, she's not one whit less butch.

As I began to get some perspective on my situation I was able to joke about it with a femme e-mail pal.

I posted, "Never thought about how hard it is to walk butch with a walking disability."

She replied in that subtle all-knowing femme way, "Suspect it is just as hard to walk femme with hurt feet. Humph."



COURT OF FRIENDS



Okay all you singles!! Looking for that special someone?? Here is your opportunity to reach out to other singles. Write out what you want other singles to know about you and what you are seeking in another. *Open Arms reserves the right to edit for length and/or content any letters submitted for publication.*

Send your information to:

The Court of Friends

P.O.Box 845, Mishawaka, IN. 46546

You will be assigned an ID number. Your letter and ID number will be published in the next issue (depending upon when we receive your information). Those wishing to respond to a published single may do so by enclosing their reply in a stamped, sealed envelope with the ID number written in pencil on the front of the envelope. Place your reply into another envelope and mail to the Court of Friends P.O. Box. Your reply will then be addressed to the corresponding single and mailed.

#59 "I'm a northern woman who enjoys life. I believe in honesty and truth. I'm owned by a nine year old small dog and learning to understand cats. I love pow wows, since I'm part Native American. I'm a classic clown, being dyslexic. I like to spend time learning new things and being energized by new adventures. Love to dance though my feet don't know where to go. "Hey Leaping Lesbians try something new- -ME!!

#60 Single, white, Christian, professional, feminine, attractive lesbian; age 28 seeking a woman with a deep sense of integrity and self-worth. A woman who has a belief in God and who has a gentle spirit. Seeking a feminine and attractive woman who is full of life. A woman who enjoys giving and receiving affection. Seeking someone who enjoys the beach, bicycling, conversation,, music, learning. reading. cuddling and the list goes on....

Please respond if you are under 40 and are substance-free. No games/no players. Friendship first/ possible relationship.

#61 Hi! I'm interested in an easy going adult womyn who holds her head high and is responsible and caring and loves life. Pressure builders and non-dog lovers need not reply! Write me soon and let's enjoy the sun and summertime!

#62 I'm a GWF, 28 from St. Joseph, MI. I'm a faithful, sincere butch/femme looking for the woman of my dreams. Let her be between 18 and 40. She enjoys quiet nights, movies, dancing and many assorted adventures that will come our way.....

#63 I've let go of the baggage. Have you? Are communication, scruples, and honesty more than words on paper to you? Do you have a positive outlook on life? Are you a SWPF? If so, this SWPF, in her mid-twenties is interested in hearing from you. I'm sincere, humorous, romantic and cute. I won't settle for second best. Why should you? Age is nothing but a number. Why sip on a glass of wine, when you can share a bottle that is made for two?

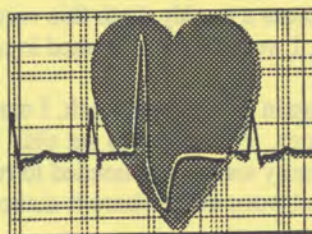
#64 Seeking that someone special who has their life together and is ready to share it with another who has the same qualities. I am an outdoor lover, but also enjoy cuddling up to-

gether to talk or just to watch a movie. I am a smoker and social drinker. Write me soon if you are ready to share your life with that special person. We both won't know if we were meant to be until you do. The worst thing that could happen is making another friend.

#65 I live in a mobile home and I have cats. I have been in the closet for over 15 years and I am very lonely. I am interested in dating another woman.

SEEKING BRIDGE PARTNERS

Not looking for a date! Instead, we are looking for one or two other women to join us in playing bridge. If you know how to play the German card game, Scharfskopf (sheephead), let us know
address: Bridge Players, 3305 Hedge Maple Court,
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HEALTH BEAT

from 5-minute cures (Rodale Press Publication)

ASTHMA.....Imagine what it'd be like to have a full breath of air in your lungs one minute, and then, after an innocent whiff of the "wrong" flower, pet or perfume, to be fighting for each life-giving breath.

As many as 10% of Americans have asthma. Often, the quickest relief comes from using medication. But there are other ways to quickly get your breathing under control.

Have Some Hot Soup. Actually, any warm liquid may help lessen the severity of asthma attacks. "Cold liquids irritate bronchial tubes, while warm liquids have the opposite effect", says E.J. Shenkel, M.D.

Pour a Cup of Tea. That's real tea, not herbal. Regular coffee will work, too. The caffeine opens airways much like the inhalers used by asthmatics. Cola will do in a pinch, but only if warm.

Drink Plenty of Water. Every day you should have at least 4 to 6 glasses. The more liquids you consume, the less thick your mucus will be.

Get a Flu Shot. Viruses are one of the key factors that trigger asthma attacks, so a flu shot every year is important.

Uncork Mucus with a Hearty Morning Cough. The cough reflex shuts down during sleep, but a hearty morning cough dislodges much of the mucus that can accumulate overnight in the bronchial tree.

TIME ALONE PUTS YOU IN TOUCH WITH A SPECIAL PERSON.....YOURSELF



IN THE NEWS

.....from the South Bend Tribune

BUSINESS BOOMING FOR MINORITY WOMEN

Businesses owned by minority women, which now have more than \$184 BILLION in annual sales, are growing three times faster than the nation's overall rate. The report by the National Foundation for Women Business Owners, shows substantial increases in the number of businesses and employees and sales revenues of companies owned by Black, Asian-American, Hispanic and Native-American women between 1987 and 1996.

"One in eight of the nearly 8 million women-owned businesses in the U.S. is owned by a woman of color," said Susan Peterson, chair-woman of the Foundation. The greatest growths have come in non-traditional areas such as construction (up 319%), Wholesale trade (up 276%), and transportation, communications and public utilities (up 253%). The top 10 states for women-owned businesses are Calif., Texas, Florida, New York, Illinois, Virginia, Maryland, New Jersey, Hawaii and Washington State.

SOUTHERN BAPTISTS TARGET DISNEY

Voted on by a show of hands, a resolution urges the 15 million members of the nation's largest Protestant denomination to take action against Disney's "anti-Christian and anti-family direction." The resolution calls for a boycott of all things Disney, including ABC, because of Disney's policy of giving health benefits to same-sex partners of employees and allowing "Gay Days" at its Parks.

AS YOU TOUCH THE SKY

This is my prayer
I cry to the Mighty Spirit
White Eagle lift my wings
so I can fly
Clear my eyes
so I can see
My broken heart needs
Your strength to be free
Free from pain
I do not understand
Free to soar above
my prison of fear
Glide my wings as I feel the sky
Help me climb the dreams of Tomorrow
& ground the nightmares of Yesterday
Open my heart & quiet my spirit
Let me know peace
& the laughter of life
This is my prayer
I spread on your wings
as you touch the sky.



submitted by Lindalee Blake

Homosexuality and the Bible

.....continued from Page 1

God's revelatory truth, by nature, is ongoing and relational. It is progressive, and is realized in those who seek to know and understand God. This process continues today and God invites all to join in a fulfilling and fruitful relationship.

The final sessions in the seminar addressed different biblical passages which are used as a means of oppression against the homosexual community. For instance, an Old Testament passage which is frequently used to characterize homosexuality as sin, is Genesis 19. This passage, which deplores a lack of hospitality towards strangers and those in need, also presents a vicious gang rape of young women, and is typically used to condemn homosexuality. Men did sexually desire men, in a lustful, violent, nonconsensual manner. **This behavior should be condemned.** However, caring and committed relationships, between adults is not being addressed in this passage; and therefore, should not be used to condemn homosexuality. An example of a New Testament scripture addressed by seminar participants is I Corinthians 6:9, which condemns those that are effeminate. The word effeminate may actually refer to male prostitutes (as translated in the New International version of the Bible). This biblical text appears to condemn sexual exploitation of young boys and is not a wholesale condemnation of homosexuality. These Old Testament and New Testament passages condemn wrongful sexual abuse of others, and should not be used as God's truth opposed to homosexual relationships. The alternative explanations of these and other biblical passages provided seminar participants with a new understanding of the Bible, and a new found confidence for confronting those who may use scripture to demean and intimidate them.

The seminar concluded with a discussion of what people could and should do to combat ignorant and arrogant use of scriptures against the homosexual community. This battle is ongoing and requires that all participate if we are to have open access to a loving God and genuine participation in the growth of humanity.
submitted by P.T.

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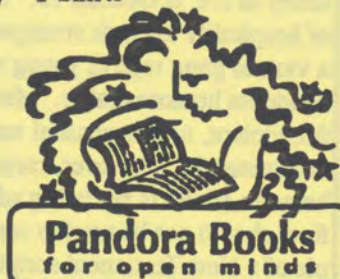
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STATEMENT**

Open Arms exists to disseminate diverse information of interest to the Michiana lesbian community. *Open Arms* is discreetly mailed 12 times a year in a security envelope with a P.O. Box return address only. Our mailing list is kept confidential and never given to other publications or special interest groups.

Subscription form: Open Arms-\$10.00/year or \$25.00/3years

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LETTING GO OF THE PAST**



July

1997

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

		1  Happy Birth- day M-J	2	3	4 	5
6	7 Hey..... MARLENE ITS THE BIG 41 this time!!!!**	8	9  HAPPY B- DAY to LINDA S. & CAROL C.	10	11	12
13 OPEN ARMS MEETING 6:30 p.m.	14	15	16 	17 Best Wishes to BARBARA J. S. FULLER LU B. SHARON F.	18 HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO JEAN 	19 BIRTHDAY WISHES to CAROLYN W. 
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27  Birthday wishes to DEB W.	28 LORRAINE B. best wishes 	29  Happy B-day TAMMY O.	30	31 HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO LINDA Y.		

** Marlene, The Rest is Downhill!!!!!! love & kisses, Mona

